

THE RECOVERY ACT: COLORADO CLOSE UP

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) was created in 1976 to assist low-income families who lacked resources to invest in energy efficiency. Operated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Native American tribes, and U.S. Territories, Weatherization funds are used to accomplish the mission of WAP, *"To reduce energy costs for low-income families, particularly for the elderly, people with disabilities, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes while ensuring their health and safety."*

Over 900 local agencies apply energy-efficiency measures to low-income homes using the most advanced technologies and testing protocols available in the housing industry. The resulting energy savings help decrease energy costs for the families and our country's dependence on foreign oil.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009, WAP received \$5 billion of funding to expand the current Program and achieve the purposes set forth in the Act. As a result, here is how Weatherization *Works* for Colorado and America!

What does the Recovery Act mean to Colorado?

The goal of the Recovery Act is to stimulate state and local economies quickly. Colorado will receive over \$2.6 billion to invest in education, infrastructure, healthcare, public safety and energy projects and will save or create jobs while also helping to protect essential state services that Coloradoans rely upon every day.

The **Colorado Governor's Energy Office (GEO)** directly benefits from the Recovery Act. The GEO's Weatherization Recovery Act budget is over \$79 million. These additional funds will make a substantial impact for the state and local weatherization program providers. Since September 2009, the GEO has:

- saved or created over 400 jobs.¹
- purchased 35 US-made vehicles.¹
- weatherized over 1,900 homes through October 2009.¹

COLORADO WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

	State Allocation	Homes Weatherized
DOE Weatherization Recovery Act Funding ²	\$79.53 million	10,478**
Program Year 2009	\$9.12 million	3,365*
Program Year 2008	\$5.45 million	3,616
Program Year 2007	\$4.89 million	3,826

WEATHERIZATION FACTS

Average annual energy cost savings per household ³	\$350
Average space heating savings	32%
Energy benefits returned for every \$1 invested ³	\$1.67

How is the Recovery Act Stimulating Colorado's Economy?

In addition to the purchase of the automobiles and over \$30,000¹ in tools and equipment from local businesses, the program has been able to hire construction and other skilled workers that had been unemployed for months. Now these new Weatherization workers have steady work and a paycheck to provide for their families.

¹ Colorado Weatherization Program Report, November 2009. All program accomplishments were completed using a combination of Recovery Act and regular grants funds.

² The Recovery Act Funding covers three years, from April 2009 through March 2012.

³ ORNL/CON-493, ORNL/CON-484, EIA Annual Energy Outlook for 2009, EIA Short Term Energy Outlook (Feb. 2008).

* Projected Number of Homes Weatherized.

** Projected Number of Homes Weatherized. This projection is based on an increased allowable expenditure per home than in previous years.



Governor Bill Ritter (*right*) works with one of the local Colorado crews to blow insulation into a weatherization client's home.

What's Next for Colorado

The GEO is increasing its outreach efforts to reach additional clients through a number of avenues.

First, the program created a standard application, brochure and other materials that can be used on a state-wide level. Then, the GEO launched a permanent toll-free number and call center, which screens and pre-qualifies potential clients. In the first month, the call center received 635 calls pertaining to the GEO program¹. In addition, the GEO established a new, information-sharing partnership with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) organization. TANF recipients are automatically qualified to receive weatherization service under the program. Under this partnership, the GEO has access to TANF beneficiaries, thereby greatly expanding the pool of eligible weatherization clients.

The GEO is also coordinating with state and county Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) offices, the Department of Human Services, utility providers, and other non-profit groups to get the word out. The GEO included Weatherization information within LEAP mailings and holiday food baskets and provided over 20,000 brochures to organizations that serve low-income communities throughout the state.

Tracking Success

Another major initiative for GEO is launching FocalPoint, a new Weatherization-focused database management and web application. This web-based tool is accessible by both GEO and its local agencies and its primary function is to manage production data and reporting between GEO and its agencies. Focalpoint was also designed to:

- facilitate data flow
- eliminate double data entry
- enable more user-friendly reporting
- allow technical staff to access to real-time information while operating in the field
- improve client identification processes.

As a result of these efforts, the program continues to grow. In August 2009, there were 844 clients recorded on the wait list. As of November 13th, 2009, there were 2,329 clients on the list and it will continue to grow into 2010¹. The Recovery Act is clearly making positive changes around the Rocky Mountain state!

Weatherization Works

Weatherization provides long term solutions to energy and non-energy issues for low-income households. Challenges such as unsafe combustion

systems or mold and moisture problems are addressed during the weatherization process when necessary. Addressing both energy and non-energy issues not only improves the efficiency of the home, but the overall quality of life for the residents.

For every \$1 invested in the program, Weatherization currently returns \$2.73 to the household and society:

- \$1.67 in reduced energy bills
- \$1.06 in non-energy benefits
 - increased local employment
 - improved housing quality
 - better health and safety

Weatherization also reduces national energy consumption and curbs the demand for imported oil. Annually, Weatherization decreases the national consumption by the equivalent of 18 million barrels of oil.

Weatherization truly works for Colorado and America!



For more information about the Weatherization Assistance Program, visit:

www.colorado.gov/energy/index.php?/residential/energy-aving-partners-program/
www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization
www.waptac.org

EERE Information Center
 1-877-EERE-INF (1-877-337-3463)
www.eere.energy.gov/informationcenter

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